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## Future of Slovene as a former Yugoslav language (Speech and language between language dictators and real life)

### Summary

Often, in public and professional circles, the Slovene language is treated as a priceless commodity that needs to be respected, nurtured and protected. Unfortunately, the result of such care is more often than not a misunderstanding of the diversity of linguistic types, as well as limited communication that may convince speakers that their knowledge is lacking. The resulting article discusses the existing outlook on the publicly spoken language in the realms of media and science in Slovenia. Most importantly, we offer a simple solution – speech (speaking) and speech research with a target goal: to develop high quality public discourse.

**Key words:** Slovene language, standard language, linguistic norm, media speech

## 1. THE PURPOSE OF THIS ARTICLE AND RESEARCH METHODS

The article offers a look into the current situation when it comes to Slovene public speech at the turn of the century by taking into account how speech developed in the past, as well as the developments when it comes to contemporary Slovene language. The issue of Slovene language being caught between literal and non-literal (standard and non-standard) use brings about many problems, mostly in public situations but especially in the media. The research methods used are empirical, based on experience and past research, and also lectures done by the author. The empirical findings<sup>1</sup> are linked to phonetic research that was made on practical material by using instrumental and perceptive phonetic analysis (with computer software such as KAY-Elementrics, Cool Edit and Praat, Boersma & Weenink, 2017) in cooperation with the Institute of Phonetics in Prague and Zagreb. The results were published in several articles (Tivadar, 1999, 2003a, 2003b, 2010, 2012). The basic research method is the descriptive method.

Along with phonetic research and research into the Slovene language, this article also takes a look at the contemporary social situation in Slovenia, as well as the philosophical and political thoughts of important Slovene intellectuals (especially Tine Hribar (2004) and France Bučar (2003)), who significantly influenced the formation of the Slovene public space at the turn of the millennium.

It should also be pointed out that the scientific conclusions in this article are not absolute and are the result of phonetic research of selected materials that are representative of the contemporary Slovene media space (such as, speech of radio announcers – Tivadar, 2004a, 2004b, and of TV presenters and journalists on the national television RTV Slovenia. Some of them (in 2018) are currently employed at a highly rated privately owned television station – Tivadar, 2010, 2012).

Contemporary public discourse and codification of language must take place within the concept of a diverse contemporary use (Tivadar, 2016), but also within the concept of the broad acceptance of literary language (Palková, 1997; Tivadar, 2010, 2012) that must be codified in the contemporary *Normative guide* and the dictionary

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<sup>1</sup> Since 1997, the author has been researching public speech in Slovenia and published numerous articles in Slovenia and the world. Alongside his work on the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana and occasionally Maribor and Koper, he also collaborates, since 1997, with the national RTV as a consultant, guest in various shows and as a lecturer in the Centre for Education and Training RTV Slovenia – *Izobraževalno središče RTV Slovenija*, most intensively from 2003 until 2010 – lectures subjects in orthoepy, phonetics and rhetoric.

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– the 'current' *Slovene normative guide* was published in 2001, the dictionary was made in 1970 and merely updated in 2014. Because of its general accessibility on the Fran portal (<https://fran.si/>) it also functions among the general and professional public as a practical manual and therefore importantly affects the contemporary written and spoken public discourse. The findings and conclusions in this article are based on the relative representativeness of the analysed media texts and speakers.

## 2. AN INTRODUCTION TO SLOVENE AND EUROPEAN NATIONALITY

In the former Yugoslavia, Slovene was a language that, for all intents and purposes, was not used on the state level of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and was limited only to the then Socialist Republic of Slovenia. Instead, the Serbo-Croatian language was present at all times through culture (music, theatre, film), sports (especially collective sports such as football and basketball), and also state and military institutions on the territory of Slovenia and within Slovene culture (especially after 1919). It was precisely the language that was used in the army that gave rise to the first major resistances and aspirations for independence by championing the use of Slovene language in public (Gjurin, 1991; Tivadar, 2012). Between 1945 and 1990, Slovene was a language that lived a half-functional life in Slovenia. Speakers of Slovene in the central part of Slovenia (Ljubljana and the surrounding towns) were quite dominant (often to the point of exclusion) against those who could not speak Slovene<sup>2</sup>. It should be pointed out that in Slovenia the most popular sport – football – was regarded as a sport for immigrants (in the novel by Andrej E. Skubic *Fužinski bluz*), same as basketball (in the novel by Goran Vojnović *Čefurji raus!*).<sup>3</sup> Various forms of intolerance did appear in certain central Slovenian areas and industrial centres (Jesenice, Velenje, Trbovlje ...) that were tied to language, which to Slovenes is (was) the most important national and nation building element, which in the past also connected the people of various origin that lived in the area of what is now the

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<sup>2</sup> Sociolinguists warn about excluding foreign speakers because of the Slovene language, where they explicitly point out that Slovene must remain 'a dominant public language on the territory of the Republic of Slovenia', which is or should be important for the development of the language and retaining and strengthening the number of its speakers (Stabej, 2010, p. 219).

<sup>3</sup> The ironic position of immigrants was and still is depicted in popular music by R. Magnifico (the song *Kdo je čefur*, Magnifico, 1995), who also tackles other marginalised groups (for example, homosexuals, the song *Halo, gospodična*, Magnifico, 2000).

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Republic of Slovenia, as well as the entire Slovene national territory (Tivadar, 2015a). Particularly due to its small size and existence on the crossroads of many cultures, this tendency for self-preservation was always present among Slovenes and in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, during the Spring of Nations, it gave birth to extreme national movements (nationalisms), such as the most important movement in this region called *Drang nach Osten*, as well as various other German cultural associations that became more prominent within the Slovene national movement<sup>4</sup>. It should be mentioned that the Slovene national territory is extremely regionally marked and had to make compromises within the Slovene language to make it more homogenized (Stabej, 2010, pp. 42–43). The question of the Slovene language is also the question of its relationship to the language spoken by regular people, which was characterised in terms of region and (rural) status.<sup>5</sup> This social (rural) and regional stratification of Slovene language is observable in the great dialectal diversity of the Slovene language, which was then standardized in terms of writing during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and standardized in terms of speech during the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Tivadar, 2010). Up and until the end of the 80s it was not recognized on a state (inter-republic) level and even during the 70s there were still massive socio-political campaigns for the use of the Slovene language in public in Slovenia (Pogorelec et al., 1983; Tivadar, 2014). Slovene linguists and public workers in the former Yugoslavia did not want to intervene linguistically in other Yugoslavian republics, however, they did want to position Slovene in a dominant role on the territory of Slovenia and grant it equal status on the state level (Stabej, 2010, p. 139). The fact is that the Serbo-Croatian language was a compulsory subject in schools in Slovenia and the only commanding language in the Yugoslav (and subsequently Slovene) army. This demand for public speech to be spoken in Slovene language on the Slovene territory in all institutions, from the Republican Assembly to the Military Court in Ljubljana, was the basis on which Slovenian independence was then built (Tivadar, 2012).

After Slovenia gained its independence in 1991, the people in Slovenia and the language itself began turning more to the west and less towards the South Slavic region and began building its Euro-Slovene identity. The concept of the Euro-Slovene was

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<sup>4</sup> Purism was present in Slovenia practically since Primož Trubar onwards and was also proportionally positively valued, if not overdone – term moderate purism (Kalin Golob, 1996, p. 86).

<sup>5</sup> The intertwining between rural and tribal origins is depicted also through the rite of inaugurating Carantanian dukes, which was allowed by the ruling Franks, while the same time it was the local influential farmers or *kosezi*, who monitored the inauguration as representatives of the people (Grafenauer, 1952).

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supposed to represent a final positioning into the European space. It is worth mentioning here that the Slovene nation is rather young and immature.

Only as late as in the 20th century did we achieve not only state sovereignty, but also affirmation as a nation of thinkers. In short, it was a period of being late, since we already affirmed ourselves as a nation of poets in the 19th century. With our thoughts and poetry we /.../ co-create. (Hribar, 2004, p. 22).

### 3. SPOKEN SLOVENE IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY

Slovene speech was dominant in the former Socialist Republic of Slovenia (1945–1990), while at the same time it coexisted culturally and nationally with the Serbo-Croatian language, which held a prestigious position in state and public institutions. This was mirrored in slang, which by the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was heavily influenced by the dominant language of the Social Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Gjurin, 1974). However today, the major influences come from English, although some connections with the Croatian region are also being discovered by younger linguists (Pulvirenti, 2016). In the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennia, the Slovene language once again opened up to the world and the influences of the global language that reflect in public and everyday communication, from the economy to lectures to state visits (Tivadar, 2014). This raises the question of Slovene statehood, which was rather timid in its expression in the general culture until the end of the 80s (if we highlight just the Slovene quasi-national television and billboard commercial campaign *Slovenija, moja dežela!*; Repe & Kerec, 2017), although at that time the rise of Slovene self-confidence was already beginning (Hribar, 2004, p. 28). There was no talk of a state or special emphasis put on the idea of a nation, as this was considered anti-state in the old Yugoslavia, while in the new Yugoslavia it was considered as an anti-socialist act (Stabej, 2010, p. 139; Toporišič, 1991a).<sup>6</sup> Even later, national identity was significantly less expressed than in other SFRY republics.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Even today in Slovenia, striving for the nation and independence is often negatively valued or considered unnecessary. This is strongly opposed by the philosopher Tine Hribar, who defends independence and formation of Slovenes as a nation with an independent state (Hribar, 2004, p. 23, p. 151).

<sup>7</sup> Largest nationalistic excesses that should have been sanctioned more intensively, were the activities of the Slovene National Party (*Slovenska nacionalna stranka*, president Zmago Jelinčič), which chose as its political slogan *Naredimo to deželo spet slovensko* (*Make this land Slovene again*) for the 1992 elections that

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This positive non-nationalistic trend is observable even today (nationalism in Slovene linguistics is discussed in more detail in Tivadar, 2018).<sup>8</sup> There was actually no need for special emphasis on the national, since apart from certain apartment complexes, Slovene territory was quite nationally homogeneous and immigrants were well integrated into society, which also points to the historical tolerance of the Slovene nation. The biggest danger came from the Yugoslav National Army (YNA) and military objects across Slovene towns and on the border. Thus it was the army that the Slovene nation fought against the most in terms of culture (weekly magazine *Mladina*, demonstrations on the trial against the JBTZ (Janša, Borštnar, Tasič, Zavrl) quartet that was spoken in Serbo-Croatian in the middle of Ljubljana) and later also through a short military conflict (June-July War).

Slovene language and the entire global public space is nowadays profoundly under the influence of a single *lingua franca*, English, which is in a way afforded the status of a working language, even though other national languages on the level of the European Union are supposed to be equal (Hribar, 2004, p. 203) but in reality are not – for them the declared European multilingualism means being familiar with several 'bigger' languages (Tivadar, 2014). Škiljan directly talks of linguistic imperialism of the English language in this globalised world that envelops all languages, even the bigger ones that can fight back on a regional or state level. In truth, even languages with larger number of speakers are becoming a sort of minority language when compared to English (Škiljan, 2002, pp. 284–286).

#### 4. LINGUISTIC CONFIDENCE

In an open Europe and a global world, a new form of nationality came to life, the Euro-Slovene (Hribar, 2004), whose basic characteristic is openness. For this openness

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alludes to the infamous words spoken by Hitler when arriving in Maribor: 'Machen Sie mir dieses Land wieder deutsch.'

<sup>8</sup> Currently, 2018, there is no national party on the rise in Slovenia (during parliamentary elections in 2018, the Slovene National Party (*Slovenska nacionalna stranka*) received only 4.17% of the votes), which does not mean that this might not change in the future, when looking at the rise of the right in Europe (example, Austria, FPÖ candidate Norbert Hofer, presidential campaign 2016; slogan *Deine Heimat braucht dich jetzt*) or that certain non-explicit national parties will, unfortunately, adopt nationalistic points of view. Philosopher Hribar is of the opinion that in the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium we did plenty to stop the extreme right and that there is no influence by the extreme right in Slovenia at the onset of the new millennium (Hribar, 2004, p. 213).

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to be unstrained, linguistic confidence is needed, which takes for granted using the Slovene language on Slovenian universities, EU institutions and within the United Nations.<sup>9</sup> The discussion regarding literary language is often-times taken negatively in Slovene linguistics. At the same time, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium, there is still an ongoing search for a new, contemporary Slovene, even though the Slovene language has a tradition in the media spanning almost 90 years (Brojan, 1999; Tivadar, 2003a) and has achieved its full formation in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The Slovene nation in part developed on the basis of opposing the other; first the German master, then the Yugoslav master. Slovene national awareness grew and still grows today, although unfortunately, mostly on the basis of opposing its neighbours, especially those from the south, like the neighbouring Croatia and also by opposing migrants that came in 2015 and 2016 across the south Balkan road (this was followed by erecting a razor barbed wire fence). Conflicts with the neighbouring Croatia, where one of the consequences is an unsolved border problem that resonates with the public, are thus even more illogical and incomprehensible since there was no conflicts on the linguistic front in contemporary times (The Slovene map of dialects for the most part did not cross the southern region, even if there are a few linguistic groups that are similar to Slovene dialects; example, *Dialektološka sekcija ISJFR ZRC SAZU*, 2016). Unfortunately, there is a lack of emphasis on the common points of both nations and languages among the Slovene and Croatian public (ties between the Kajkavian and Slovene language, ties between Istrian and Obmursko in both states etc.; Šekli, 2013). There is plenty of success and cooperation with tourism and economy (winters in Slovenia, summers in Croatia) and the same goes for scientific exchange. Why then are there such conflicts in the public – from the border question, Teran wine protection and the Ljubljana Bank savers and the purchase of Mercator by Agrokor and the failed purchase of Sunčani Hvar by Terme Čatež? This is a question

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<sup>9</sup> Despite the aforementioned decline or halting of the right (Hribar, 2004, p. 213) it is still worrisome that in Slovenia simply the linguistic confidence and the desire for a wide circle of speakers to be able to speak the national language is nowadays characterized as nationalistic (for example in Gorjanc, Krek, & Popič, 2015). At least in the professional public those discussing this should make a clear distinction between nationalism and striving for quality linguistic knowledge. Since superficial accusations with 'nationalists' or even worse terms relativises and obscures the truly negative nationalistic acts, which for now are quite rare in Slovenia.

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that media and public speech researchers will need to answer concretely in the future.<sup>10</sup>

In actuality, the regional conflicts within both states are bigger than those between the aforementioned neighbouring states (opposition between Ljubljana : Maribor; Zagreb : Split, etc.). Inner-national conflicts among the proverbially unified Croats (an opinion formed by the Slovene public) even with football, for example at the EURO 2016 that also had regional background (conflict: the capital vs. the rest of Croatia, especially Dalmatia) confirm this statement.<sup>11</sup> The intertwining of Slovene and Croatian languages is historically mandated and with new and easier migrations (the removal of the Schengen border between the states) it will become even more intensive. School and the standardized language strictly divide the two languages, nations and cultures. Unfortunately, ideology (often encouraged by foreign, non-Slavic regions) often obscures (Slavic) cultural similarities and only depicts the differences. This was claimed also by Ivan Cankar:

Within the Austro-Hungarian monarchy itself we are chopped into little pieces, so to speak. Political contacts among these pieces are practically hamstrung. I could say that in terms of politics, despite a single sceptre and a single anthem, Zagreb is almost further away from Ljubljana than Paris or Madrid. It will take great effort and a lot of patience to straighten what history and malicious politics have bent out of shape. We began to seek a way in the last few years to come to political contact at least among those pieces of the Yugoslav that are doomed to live in the monarchy. (Cankar, 1967).

It should be noted that Cankar strove for a joint Yugoslav state, which would also include Croats. Pointing out the differences between Slovenes and other South Slavs mirrors a time from a hundred years ago, when Slovene identity was still being strengthened through such differences. Both independent states, today members of the European Union, have no more reasons left to be unconfident and can connect equally in matters of culture and politics with the neighbouring and closely related Slavic nation.

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<sup>10</sup> As a Slovenistics expert and a Slovene I would like to point out the proverbial conflict and (self)destructiveness, also jealousy of the Slovene individual that often overshadows positive attributes (charitableness, honesty and modesty).

<sup>11</sup> A similar claim could be said about Carinthia Austria where the linguistic difference is much greater, but where cultural similarities to Slovenia could be even greater than to other parts of Austria and the German speaking world.

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#### 4.1. What is the proper Slovene?<sup>12</sup>

The question that often arises in Slovenia is – what is the proper Slovene, what is a beautiful Slovene language? At the same time, there is an ongoing search for the 'truly ideal' speaker. Then there is also the opposing opinion that Slovene is a 'hard', 'antiquated' language and that there is no need to be so 'literary rigid'. In the last 10 years there were great polemics regarding the novel by Goran Vojnović *Čefurji raus!* (Vojnović, 2008), where he writes in a specific genre (style) of the Slovene language – on purpose and to be slightly provocative it could be called *fužinščina* (Fužine are the suburbs of Ljubljana. Mostly inhabited by people coming from the south region of the ex-Yugoslavia and they have consequently developed a unique and distinct sociolect popularly called *fužinščina*).

This could include various jokes connected with everyday life in Fužine, for example (Velongy, 2008):

Denis pozvoni Sanelu na domofon: 'Dobar dan. A je Sanel doma?'  
Sanelova mama odgovori: 'Ni Sanela doma. Sanel brca košarku.'

'SAAAALMIIEEEEE! A čuješ ti mene kaj jaz tebe slišim!!!!'

Profesor za matematiko iz srednješolskih časov:  
'Vas dva zadaj, dajta tiho!'

'Bom kupo pištol pa bom pol vse pomrl da bo kri tekala po šipa.'

'Sanel prid doma na kosilo, bo vse mal po mal mrzl.'  
Učitelj: 'Dečki, deklice – teci tek trkom!'

'Ćamile, neh se kolesat po travi!'

What was the reaction by native speakers of Slovene when reading these sentences? Laughter, disgust, anger... in short, emotional responses, same as with the content and language of the novel *Čefurji raus!*, it is full of primal emotions. Which is not bad for the book – it is simply the style of the language.

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<sup>12</sup> See Tivadar, 2016.

Looking at the film roles in Slovene films and shows (radio and television) at the break of the millennium, we arrive at an interesting conclusion – *čefurji*, *immigrants from the south*, are often doormen (Veso in the TV-series *Naša mala klinika*), cleaning ladies (Fata in the TV-series *TV Dober dan*), garbage collectors (film *Kajmak in marmelada*), in the film *Kajmak in marmelada* also members of the mafia... (a little bit about this already in Tivadar 2003b, 2008, p. 115). And all of them possess a distinct 'south accent'. This is also the Slovene language. With these humorous television characters the stereotypical (arrogant) view of the 'southern immigrants' is enforced.

## 4.2. Dialects and Slovene literary language

Nowadays, there are still numerous Slovene dialects in existence, which in the past were often described as ugly, but especially lately also as a treasure and an invaluable beauty of the Slovene language (Smole, 2015; Tivadar, 2009). Some predicted that dialects would disappear already in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Vodušek, 1950, p. 1150) or at least that they will gradually disappear. Yet the dialects persevered in Slovenia. This means that the geographical diversity is also being preserved (dialects) and not only the social diversity of the language (sociolects). Many local media, commercial and national, strengthened these dialects and have delivered them outside the local homestead (Tivadar, 2008b; Valh Lopert, 2013). This then begs the question whether the language in Slovenia is (mostly) socially defined (the English example in Great Britain, Skubic, 2005) or is the Slovene language defined through dialects, considering the differing economic and cultural development of individual regions (Hanžek, 2000). Sociological value of dialects – social and geographical (so called social genres (*socialne zvrsti*)) division by Toporišič into literary and non-literary, dialectal speech (Toporišič, 2000) is mirrored also on the programme of the national RTV television.<sup>13</sup> Higher socio-economic-cultural development of the centre,

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<sup>13</sup> Diversity and a certain influence of various provincial environment does not mean that Ljubljana is not the centre, just by looking at the amount of news during prime time daily news shows by the commercial POP TV and the National TV Slovenia, Ljubljana occupies more than 80% of them. This is according to research done for March 2006 by the long-time TV employee Marko Prpič (Prpič, 2006; Tivadar, 2008a, p. 138). One finding by Marko Prpič is very interesting, it claims that in comparison with previous years the two shows (*24ur* and *TV Dnevnik*) in 2006 are more similar than two years ago, both publish fewer news and have less agents. However, he would not relinquish the list of 292 people

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Ljubljana, dictates higher influence of private speech of the central area within the local and state level media. However, it is not the only dialectal speech in public, it can be said that most Slovenes identify with their own region (Tivadar, 2003a, 2006).<sup>14</sup>

Researching and often overly enforcing personal and non-public linguistic variety also gives rise to its contrast – longing and glorifying the 'beautiful' Slovene language, which came to light also during reviews and criticisms of Vojnovič's novel *Čefurji raus!.* In Slovene linguistics since the 60s, the literary language is considered to be the 'highest', most perfect, most demanding, most prestigious linguistic variety:

High(est) social form of a language /.../ Literary (standard) language is also the most conscious social form /.../ Natural live spoken foundations are found in the environment with the largest prestige. For Slovene language this means Ljubljana and the wider city environment around it. (headword *knjižni jezik* 'literary language', Toporišič, 1992, pp. 82–83).

The following could be added to this definition:

When those speaking literary Slovene and those writing literary Slovene would truly adhere to imperfect or wrong rules of grammar and the dictionary, nothing would encourage them to improve their learning /.../ Since what is right in pronunciation is that, which is confirmed by the speech practice of the linguistic area and sections of the population that dictate such things. (Toporišič, 1967, p. 115, p. 118).

If these things are understood in the sense of the natural development of a language, many of the words from this definition can be agreed with. However, the literary language is not some private, spontaneously developing subject. The underlined part of the text ('linguistic area and sections of the population that dictate such things') can be linked to the popular practice among proofreaders (for speech and writing) on the RTV Slovenia and elsewhere and with gentler words, which is the consequence of broad-mindedness and high quality pedagogical work of authors Cvetka Šeruga Prek and Emica Antončič:

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constantly appearing on both televisions due to fear of abuse since election time was closing in. This state of things can be detected even today, but there is little talk of this in the public.

<sup>14</sup> Are there 'Fužine' in Murska Sobota or Maribor, is a rhetorical question for another discussion, a hypothetical answer based on experience is NO.

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What we listen to today in Slovene National Assembly, in schools – from primary to the university, on our local radio and TV stations, in courts, churches, funerals, press conferences and public presentations etc., is for the most part very far from a proper standard Slovene and too obviously betrays the regional origin of the speakers, their inability to hear and control their speech and their weak awareness of the speech situation they found themselves in. /.../ With great refinement we should chase the fragile equilibrium between our scientific system and the development of living speech and at the same time not give in to pressures of ignorance and 'theories of spontaneity'. (Šeruga Prek & Antončič, 2003, p. 7, p. 12).<sup>15</sup>

Also in this quotation is the tendency towards the absolute and ideal and a lot of criticisms towards (non-ideal) public speech, while the authors also point out the suitable relationship between public and private speech. The words 'veneration' and the excessive elitism of literary pronunciation are rarely expressed in modern public speech, but are often emphasised in schools (Tivadar, 2006), and also in relation to dialects (Smole, 2015). This 'elite' outlook was most clearly depicted during a round table back when the current *Lexicon* (Slovenska akademija znanosti in umetnosti [SAZU], 2001) was just being published and a conflict ensued between two seemingly, also in terms of education, opposite sides – *the presenter side* from practical experience (Ajda Kalan, Nataša Dolenc) and *the scientific side* (Jože Toporišič, Janez Dular). Problems arose with numerals ending in -ájst – *dvanájst, trindájst* ... (in the *Slovene 2001* the stress is codified on the last syllable). Radio presenters and speech mentors protested on the basis of 'no one speaks like that', while the scientific side claimed that 'true, natural Ljubljana citizens' pronounce only in that manner (examples are taken from the round table regarding the *Slovene orthography* (Slovenska akademija znanosti in umetnosti [SAZU], 2001), on the 16<sup>th</sup> of May 2002, 19.00–22.00, published during the *Studio at 17 o'clock* (*Studio ob 17-ih*), on the 20<sup>th</sup> of May 2002, on Channel 1 of the Radio Slovenija, see Tivadar,

<sup>15</sup> In the aforementioned words by both speech editors on the radio and theatre there is an opposition between science (linguistics and linguists) and practice (editors on the radio and in the – within this quote the emphasised word *scientific (system)* warns of this. Only rarely is this opposition explicitly worded (for example, Svete, 2000, where the actor in an interesting manner question the use of the *Dictionary of Standard Slovene* and at the same time argues for the importance of an expert-editor in the theatre). This opposition is often also ostensible and conditioned by the lack of knowledge of those who use the language, which is a consequence of unsuitable speech lessons within the Slovene educational system (from primary school and up to college).

2003a; Tivadar & Jurgec, 2003). It is worth noting that other radio journalists present on this round table argued that *dvánajst* is better since it is then better understood whether this is 'dva-' or 'pet-' -najst. Taking into regard the movable stress position in Slovene, this could actually contribute to a better and easier understanding. However, among numerals from 12 to 19 there is practically no phonemically similar first part (clear articulation therefore suffices) and at the same time the numeral 12 is an independent unit and has almost nothing in common with the number 2. Besides, the stress in English is also on [-teen], which in no way decreases comprehension.

The argument over the stress on numerals between 12 and 19 is especially unnecessary if we take into account the geographical diversity of Slovenia: approximately half of Slovenia has stress on the root and the other on the last syllable (Ljubljana, according to contemporary surveys, has stress predominantly on the root, if the speaker or their parents are not from outside of Ljubljana; Tivadar, 2012) and an already established variable codification in the *Dictionary of Standard Slovene* (Slovenska akademija znanosti in umetnosti [SAZU], 1970–1991). The manner and intensity of argumentation on the aforementioned round table showed partiality and emotional reactions when linguistic questions were concerned, which is not scientific and mostly showcases absoluteness and exclusion. The exposed division according to geographic origin is otherwise a Slovene characteristic in a positive and negative sense.<sup>16</sup> A quote by the winner of the Kresnik award Štefan Kardoš:

/.../ The handicap of those not from Ljubljana could begin to crop up in another way. It seems that fashionable (if not even unmarked) language of Slovene literature is becoming more and more the Ljubljana dialect and all other dialects remain only as a form of stylistic colouring of various types of markings. If this is so, then for an author to live on the periphery will truly become a handicap – living on the periphery will mean living away from the living language of literature. /.../ (Kardoš, 2007, p. 56).

Resistance against the centre is nothing new, but exaggeration could contribute to new divides such as those from the 16<sup>th</sup> and up to the 19<sup>th</sup> century when Slovene joined together based on a common written language. At that time, the central

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<sup>16</sup> Also in contemporary phonetic research the dialectal origin is an important criteria when describing Slovene language, which usually means the 'central Slovene' language (Jurgec, 2011).

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Slovene literary language stepped back against the all-encompassing common Slovene linguistic code (Tivadar, 2010).

#### **4.3. Croatian relationship towards literature and the dialect from a Slovene point of view**

If we as foreign speakers of Croatian language compare the relationship towards the spoken literary language in contemporary Croatian textbooks, we can see the clear distinction between literary and non-literary.

Even younger Croatian colleagues in their textbooks clearly state:

The impossibility to define from which area a certain radio or TV speaker originates from is the best proof of his or her proficiency in terms of speech and pronunciation. Everyone recognises him or her as a speaker of Croatian language but is at the same time unrecognisable as speaker from a certain part of Croatia. (Kišiček & Stanković, 2014, p.134, translated by Luka Ličar and Hotimir Tivadar).

The importance of proper pronunciation by TV hosts, their public image and their orientation into non-dialectal pronunciation was stressed by Ivo Škarić and Gordana Varošaneć-Škarić who claim that most of television speakers still exhibit traces of their organic (dialectal) speech. The selection of television speakers depends mostly on their talent for speech and not so much on how close their primary speech is to the standard language, as used to happen in the past. Due to the great variety in dialects and the distance of these speakers from the standard language it puts that much more importance on additional and thorough education of TV hosts in orthoepy (Škarić & Varošaneć-Škarić, 1994, pp. 11–12). Slovene language is even more diverse in dialects than the Croatian language, which is why orthoepy and proper education is important for publicly spoken Slovene. Kišiček and Stanković point out that the standard language is not used at home but rather in public. In other non-public speech situations the dialectal speech is used, which shows the richness of linguistic diversity (Kišiček & Stanković, 2014, p. 134). The fact that in Croatia the rhetoric-speech science and also practice is present within the University since the 60s surely helps achieve such speech maturity (the establishing of the Phonetics Department (*Odsjek za fonetiku*), 1966). The Croatians do not discuss regional origin, the 'true speaker', speech and 'refreshing the language' as it happens in Slovenia. This Slovene insecurity in regards to standards and desires to alter the literary (standard)

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language obviously shows how insecure Slovene linguists are, which comes as a consequence of a lack of tradition and linguistic self-confidence and also a lack of knowledge when it comes speech traditions and the media.

#### 4.3.1. RP-pronunciation in Slovene and Croatian

The theory is clear in numerous standard languages, we can take as an example the Czech language and the definition of their standard language as generally accepted (Palková, 1997, p. 321). This also exists in Slovene in the form of a unified spoken standard language, RP-pronunciation, based on written Slovene, with the vowel stress basis of central Slovenia, meaning Ljubljana and its surroundings, without the reduced vowel-consonant clusters. This claim can be made based on contemporary media research (Tivadar, 2010, 2012). However, Toporišič proposes that due to the large number of dialects in Slovenia there exists a commonly accepted (1976, 1991b) or literary (2000) RP-pronunciation in Slovenia, which is predominantly based on the speech spoken in Ljubljana. Nevertheless, this terminology and description, proposed by Toporišič, does not sufficiently cover the actual and everyday use of the language. Varošaneč-Škarić, in her research of changes in the accentuation system and the adoption of these within the Standard Croatian language (2003), first defines English, which is RP-English (originally a term by Jones, Received Pronunciation, 1926; he also lists the Windsor Lewis, 2003, which proposes the term 'General English' that was used already in 1972 in the *Concise pronouncing dictionary*; Varošaneč-Škarić, 2003, pp. 485–486). Here, she additionally points out that regional speech and the so-called prestigious regional speech are no longer relevant to the standard language. Varošaneč-Škarić in her book *Fonetska njega glasa i izgovora* (2010) uses two terms, generally Received Pronunciation (*općeprihvaćen izgovor (hrvatskog)* – OPIH) and Received Pronunciation (*prihvaćen izgovor* – PI), which points to a level of standardization and an orientation towards general acceptance, as with Palková (Varošaneč-Škarić, 2010, p. 147). Forming a standard based on the origin of the speakers was a tendency of Toporišič (see previous chapter) and is also the tendency of some younger linguists (Jurgec, 2011). In a contemporary language, especially a standard language, it is important that the language is generally accepted among its speakers, first and foremost in the geographical area of a country. At the same time, Varošaneč-Škarić says that a linguist should describe and not prescribe a contemporary standard speech, which is then 'inserted into dictionaries and manuals' (Varošaneč-Škarić, 2003, p. 486).

Of key importance for general acceptance in Slovenia is the national media house with decades of linguistic and cultural tradition – radio 90 years and television 60 years (Tivadar, 1999, 2003a). Speakers are chosen through speech auditions, additionally educated (learning centre, Tivadar, 1999) and have a great influence on the listeners (many speakers later move to commercial media houses (Tivadar, 2006)).

## 5. THE IMPORTANCE AND ROLE OF THE NATIONAL TELEVISION RTV

This chapter seeks to emphasise the importance of the National RTV-house, which is even greater today due to the general accessibility of archives – the reversibility of the spoken language – something that commercial televisions lack or require payment for. HTV (*Hrvatska televizija* – Croatian Television) uploads many talk shows to YouTube, while Slovene RTV very rarely does this.

As said before, Slovene national territory was fragmented throughout history and nationality was built based on a common language (literary Slovene), while Croatian nationality was created foremost on the basis of state and law traditions (Zajc, 2006, pp. 12–13). Slovene national RTV Television was the one that since setting up the radio (1928; more in Tivadar, 2003a) began to also establish Slovene in the public space. Spoken language in Slovene schools was still subordinate to written communication (Tivadar, 2015b). Slovene linguistics, except for the 1946 monograph *Slovensko pravorečje* (Rupel, 1946), had no independent Slovene orthoepy, and there was also no active research into speech and media language. Speech was based on the rules written in the Slovene syntax, which meant greater ties into written language. This often meant excessive speech interpretation akin to reading and learning by personal feeling. After the media was democratised, the likeability factor came to the forefront: while on the radio the main factor was the 'pleasant' voice and the ability to communicate properly, on television it was the appearance, voice and also the ability to communicate properly. Lately, on television, this is limited only to – *pleasant voice and appearance*.

On many spoken media, the auditions became the standard (picking presenters, journalists and others) that help achieve greater critical mass, which enables better choice. A pioneer in executing such auditions was the Radio Slovenia, where at the beginning they mostly picked candidates to be educated as speakers – their criteria was very strict and sometimes subjective, clear criteria especially for the Slovene

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language and speech were not established: 'pleasant, appealing, deep and velvety' voices (quality of voice was defined for the Croatian language in Varošanec-Škarić, 2005), 'limited' dialectal elements, systemic criteria were limited to proper pronunciation of phonemes, stress and the absence of a dialect, 'pleasant' speech melody, fluid speech (fluentness), and less so when it came to suitable sentence intonation and sensible accentuation. Learning was based on lessons with a teacher (mentor) and later with a phonetician. Often experienced speakers (presenters), who then became mentors, did their work based on feeling and 'aesthetic' criteria. The absoluteness and non-variability when it comes to stress or phonemes was thus a logical consequence, since a single speaker or a narrow group of speakers as a model in general have no variability – variability is introduced through different speakers coming from different dialects, languages. Even the relatively new orthoepy manual that was produced based on experience and rules from Toporišič's grammar (Šeruga Prek & Antončič, 2003), does not allow, for example, labiodental duplicats before alveorals /l/ and /r/ in anlaut and root position ([vlada, vrata]), even though its use, according to some research of the spoken language and also the speakers reading the texts on the CD that came with the aforementioned manual – is at least duplicated, therefore [vlada/wlada, vreme/wreme]. The labiodental variant may even be dominating (Gošte, 2012; Tivadar, 1999, 2013). When it comes to labiodental pronunciation, despite tolerant and sensible dealings regarding education on the RTV Slovenia or in theatres (*author's experience*), the two authors, in accordance with Toporišič's point of view in the *Slovene Grammar*, even claim:

SP 62 (*Slovenski pravopis / Slovene orthography*, 1962) still allowed before l, lj and r the pronunciation of labiodental v. This change was made after the publication of Toporišič's *Slovene grammar* (1976) and the *Načrta pravil za novi slovenski pravopis (Rules guidelines for the new Slovene orthography)* (1981). Regarding the pronunciation of v before root v /probably they mean r/ and l (vreme, vlada) there is still quite a few polemics and resistances going on, mostly with speakers outside central Slovenia. (Šeruga Prek & Antončič, 2003, p. 152).

If size and the intertwining of Slovene national territory is taken into account, the restriction into 'central' in 'non-central' speech is simple, but when taking into account the linguistic reality and modernity, it is unsuitable – what is a central speech? What is the 'true Ljubljana speech'?

This excessive care for language, based on the Ljubljana speech, in many cases still survives today. It should be noted that the RTV programme council on 21<sup>st</sup> of April 2009 during its sessions opened up a discussion on language, which is to be commended, and even on the session itself an extensive debate developed regarding language and speech. However, the media barely mentioned this and even the television house barely mentioned that there indeed was such a discussion about language (what the discussion was like and what they talked about seemed not to be important enough for the wider public). Final consequences of this initiative and the decisions made on the session were: critical monitoring of the programme (by selected individuals), better editing of speakers, creation of a guide, etc. The debates by the RTV programme councillors (from journalists to politicians and other public persons) were most of all intended to emphasise their own worries regarding the language, which is limited only to the activities of editing certain (chosen!) assessors. These were supposed to be well known mentors for speech on the Radio Slovenia, who already co-created the spoken language of the national media in the last few decades and also caused the awe and trepidation towards Slovene (literary) language and speech in general. Fear of proper language leads toward linguistic insecurity.

During this session by the programme council a new orthoepic direction was set: the speech of the Slovene National Radio is the ideal that the National Television should try to emulate, since the radio has a decades long tradition of educating presenters. Nothing was said of the existing radio norms, speakers on the radio and television, and the relationship between television and radio.

## **6. CONCLUDING REMARKS ON SPEECH AND THE SLOVENE LANGUAGE IN REGARDS TO THE CROATIAN LANGUAGE**

The fact is that the standard language in Croatia is the prestigious and pan-Croatian linguistic code, self-evidently exalted and owned by a self-confident Croatian public speaker (Kišiček & Stanković, 2014). Often, there are intensive discussion on literature and standards in Slovenia, the national component and research into speech is often burdened with a private, dialectal speech code, which brings along a plethora of peculiarities and incredible phonetic occurrences. Slovene public speech is left over to spontaneity or perfect control and editing, the two extremes that lead to an extreme, dictatorial relationship towards the language. A higher, general level of speech cannot be attained this way.

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The only solution to improve Slovene speech is through media, film and theatre speech research and by taking into account proper arguments (empirical research). The wrong way would be to prove 'real' solutions based on one's grandeur and tradition or fashion, which is a simple solution that only manages to multiply 'experts' for phonetics or rhetoric, which is such a 'fine sounding' word for the general public. More high quality research can be possible only within an organised and institutionalised (research) unit for language and speech, for example, within the Phonetics' Institute (or Department) on the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana, similar to those that already exist in Zagreb or Prague, to mention only some of the closer Universities for Slovenes (in terms of space, culture and history).<sup>17</sup>

Research into Slovene speech is crucial especially in the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium. 'Current' research that can be found in the *Slovene grammar* and *Slovene orthography* in many cases does not reflect the actual state of the language and is often the reason for a lot of communication noise when teaching Slovene and also when considering the wider context.<sup>18</sup>

In particular, it is necessary to highlight the view on language and speech from the perspective of an expert on Slovene language and culture – from a linguistic (development and peculiarities of Slovene language), cultural (meaningfulness and function of the language in Slovenia and in international territory) and also literary (including film and theatre creativity) directions of observation and research of a scientific object, which is the Slovene language in its spoken form. Slovene (literary) language is an economic, social and national strength and life of the entire Slovene territory in a geographic and spiritual sense. It has its tradition and image that is unlike any other personal spoken expression. Elitism and nihilistic exclusion and geographic limitation of the 'slightly' different simply due to small mistakes or diverse variants lead to a reduction of an already small number of speakers of Slovene. The only limitation to the standard language is the quality of the message and communication.

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<sup>17</sup> Slovene territory has plenty of schools for rhetoric, various speech and performance school, faculties and institutes that deal with media questions (Tivadar, 2016). While on Slovene faculties and other schools there is no internationally comparable institute for speech research.

<sup>18</sup> It should be mentioned that cooperation with external institutions is crucial – National RTV Slovenia, POP TV, numerous radio stations and other spoken media, which through their financial, technical, staff and organisational abilities could help carry out projects. Cooperation could take place through commissioning expertise reports and various courses and by executing concrete project that would be of interest to media houses.

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Slovenija

## **Budućnost slovenskoga kao jezika bivše Jugoslavije (Jezik i govor između jezičnih diktatora i svakodnevne uporabe)**

### **Sažetak**

U javnom i poslovnom kontekstu prema slovenskome jeziku često se odnosi kao prema fenomenu koji treba poštivati, hraniti i čuvati. Nažalost, pretjerana briga vrlo često za rezultat ima nerazumijevanje raznolikosti jezičnih stilova, ograničavanje komunikacije i uvjeravanje govornika da im je znanje manjkavo. U članku se raspravlja o postojećem pogledu na slovenski govoreni jezik u okviru medija i znanosti. Također, nudi se jednostavno rješenje – govor (govorenje) i istraživanje govora s ciljem određivanja kvalitetnoga javnog diskursa.

**Ključne riječi:** slovenski jezik, standardni jezik, jezična norma, medijski govor